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Tributes to

Abraham Lincoln

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources providing testimonials lauding the 16th President of the United States

Surnames beginning with

Ta

From the files of the Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

71.2009.085.02131

Taft, William

What Lincoln Meant to W. H. Taft

From an ARTICLE in THE SPRINGFIELD SUNDAY REPUBLICAN

ANNIVERSARY—The anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth, with all that it recalls of the great crisis through which he served the nation, occurs this year in another time of grave anxiety. It is an hour in which to ponder, more than is our wont, on what Lincoln means, or may mean, to us who form the great mass of simple citizenry in this richly favored land. It is also a time to ponder on what Lincoln means, or may mean, to those who, in the long line of succession in our national leadership, carry on their shoulders such burdens of responsibility, though never since quite like his, as Lincoln bore through four soul-testing years of civil war.

Another President, who gave his testimony in an unconsciously dramatic moment, is called as a witness. He was William Howard Taft. He drew from Lincoln something of the quality that makes him still remembered as the most gallant loser in the history of our presidential elections. It enabled him, even in defeat, to contribute to our political tradition, as Adlai Stevenson has done more recently, something fine and knightly.

TROUBLES—In the spring of 1910, when his presidential term had still nearly three years to run, Taft's troubles were mounting. Cheered by the revolt in the House of Representatives over its rules, the Democrats were on their way to victory in the congressional elections later that year. But, more bitter to Taft, the rift between him and Theodore Roosevelt, who had done so much to make him President, was widening.

As the spring advanced and the quarrel grew, Taft invited to the White House, on a Sunday, that they might be free of interruption, a friend of long standing to whom he wished to tell, in confidence but in detail, his side of the unhappy story. Taft began by suggesting to the friend, a journalist, that he return to the White House offices the next day so as to read at leisure the entire file of Taft's letters to Roosevelt.

After offering that extraordinary privilege, duly given the next day, Taft recounted with meticulous care the circumstances under which he had chosen each member of his Cabinet. This was to refute the charge that he had pledged to Roosevelt the appointment of certain of Roosevelt's favorites and then had failed to make the pledge good.

SORROW—As Taft went on with the unhappy story, denying any such pledges and detailing how and why he had chosen some men and rejected others, his sorrow at the whole business mounted. But, like the great gentleman he was, he seemed more deeply hurt by the breaking of a prized friendship, to which he felt that he had been fully loyal, than he was hurt by any menace to his own political fortunes.

As he went on, adding detail to detail in a story that was to have historic consequences, his manifest unhappiness grew heavier and heavier. And then, as his listener concentrated on catching each word, he suddenly paused.

Before Taft spoke again, he straightened himself in his chair, squared his shoulders and sat erect. Then, in quiet but resolute tones, he went on.

"But when I think of what that man bore," he began again, and for the first time his listener realized that Taft was looking at the portrait of Lincoln which hung on the White House wall. "But when I think of what that man bore, I think that any President who comes after him can bear far lesser troubles with courage and philosophy."

That is what Lincoln, whom Vachel Lindsay called the "prairie lawyer" but "the master of us all," means, or may mean, to "any President whom comes after him."

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http://archive.org/details/tributestoabrahatalinc

12 TAFT, William Howard. President of the United States. Chief-Justice U. S. Supreme Court. ADS, 4to, Supreme Court. Signed. A magnificent sentiment expressed by Taft about Lincoln, one President of another. ". . . *One cannot read of Abraham Lincoln without loving him. One cannot think of his struggles, of his life and its tragic end without weeping. One cannot study his efforts, his conscience, his heroism and the burdens of bitter attack and calumny which he suffered and think of the place he now occupies in the history of this country without a moral inspiration of the most stirring and intense character.*" Taft is almost impossible to get in holograph, although his typewritten letters are very common. $50.00

The Collector May 1938

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

His Character Analyzed by a President, an Ex-President and Other Noted Americans.

1912

By WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT:

I DON'T think it is too much to say that Lincoln had the most judicial temperament of any man in history. He considered the arguments of his opponents with all the fairness of John Stuart Mill and preserved that calm judicial consideration of the views of every one that became important, and in his disagreement with them he left nothing more than the application of an apt story or a clear Euclid-like demonstration of error without sting. With his love of truth, the supreme trait of his intellect, accompanied by a conscience that insisted on the right as he knew it, with a great heart full of tenderness, we have the combination that made Lincoln one of the two greatest Americans.

The south knows as the north knows now that there is no soul that unites them in perfect amity like that of Abraham Lincoln. The south knows as the north knows that every administration that removes another cause of misunderstanding between the sections or that brings them closer together in any way is acting under the inspiration of him who could love his entire country with undiminished ardor when nearly one-half was seeking to destroy its integrity.

By THEODORE ROOSEVELT:

LINCOLN saw into the future with the prophetic imagination usually vouchsafed only to the poet and the seer. He had in him all the lift toward greatness of the visionary, without any of the visionary's fanaticism or egotism, without any of the visionary's narrow jealousy of the practical man and inability to strive in practical fashion for the realization of an ideal. He had the practical man's hard common sense and willingness to adapt means to ends, but there was in him none of that morbid growth of mind and soul which blinds so many practical men to the higher things of life. No more practical man ever lived than this homely backwoods idealist, but he had nothing in common with those practical men whose consciences are warped until they fail to distinguish between good and evil, fail to understand that strength, ability, shrewdness, whether in the world of business or of politics, only serve to make their possessor a more noxious, a more evil member of the community if they are not guided and controlled by a fine and high moral sense.

By HENRY WATTERSON:

REVILED even as the Man of Galilee, slain even as the Man of Galilee, yet as gentle and unoffending, a man who died for men! Roll the stone from the grave and what shall we see? Just an American, the Declaration of Independence his confession of faith, the constitution of the United States his ark and covenant of liberty, the Union his redoubt, the flag his shibboleth.

Called like one of old, within a handful of years he rose at a supreme moment to supreme command, fulfilled the law of his being and passed from the scene an exhalation of the dawn of freedom. We may still hear his cheery voice bidding us be of good heart, sure that "right makes might," entreating us to pursue "with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."

By Justice CHARLES E. HUGHES:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was an acute man. But we erect no monuments to shrewdness. * * * Lincoln was a man of principle. * * * He ever sought for the foundation principle and built upon it with sure confidence that the house which was founded upon the rock could not be destroyed by the storm. He was profoundly an apostle of liberty, but for liberty under the law, developed and applied in accordance with constitutional principle. He was a man who met each demand as it arose. To the radicals he was too conservative; to the conservatives he was too radical.

By BOOKER T. WASHINGTON:

MY first knowledge of Abraham Lincoln came in this way: I was awakened early one morning before the dawn of day, as I lay wrapped in a bundle of rags on the dirt floor of our slave cabin, by the prayers of my mother, just before leaving for her day's work, as she was kneeling over me, earnestly praying that Abraham Lincoln might succeed and that one day she and her boy might be free. * * * As an individual, grateful as I am to Lincoln for freedom of body, my gratitude is still greater for freedom of soul, the liberty which permits one to live up in that atmosphere where he refuses to permit sectional or racial hatred to drag down, to warp and narrow his soul. * * * Lincoln lives today because he had the courage which made him refuse to hate the man at the south and the man at the north when they did not agree with him.

Taft, Roosevelt, Hughes, Washington

WRIGHT

Taft, William Howard

TAFT FINDS LINCOLN A STIRRING INSPIRATION.

President-Elect Among Noted Men to Send Views to Massachusetts School.

(Special to The World.)

FALL RIVER, Mass., Feb. 12.—The High School held exercises to-day, at which letters on Lincoln from noted men, gathered by Holmer M. Underwood, supervisor of English, were read. Some of them follow:

By President-Elect Taft.

We never had a man in public life whose sense of duty was stronger, whose bearing toward those with whom he came in contact, whether friends or political opponents, was characterized by a greater sense of fairness than Abraham Lincoln. We never have had a man in public life who took upon himself uncomplainingly the woes of the nation and suffered in his soul from the weight of them as he did.

We never have had a man in our history who had such a mixture of farsightedness, understanding of people, of common sense, of high sense of duty, power of inexorable logic and of confidence in the goodness of God in working out a righteous result as this great product of the soil of our country.

One cannot read of him without loving him. One cannot think of the struggles of his life and his tragic end without weeping. One cannot study his efforts, his conscience, his heroism and his patriotism and the burdens of bitter attack under which he suffered, and now think of the place he occupies in the history of this country, without a moral inspiration of the most stirring and intense character.

WILLIAM H. TAFT.

By William J. Bryan.

Abraham Lincoln occupies a growing place in history. As an orator he stands in the front rank. His speeches exhibit the two essentials in oratory—he knew what he was talking about, and he believed what he said. To these he added remarkable clearness of statement and extraordinary aptness of illustration. As a statesman he possessed the firmness for an executive and the patience which is indispensable to a reformer. * * * Added to his work, he was a patriotic American, and illustrated the possibilities of American citizenship under the stimulation of self-government. WILLIAM J. BRYAN.

By Justice Brewer.

I cannot claim an intimate personal acquaintance, though I passed an afternoon with him before his first nomination to the Presidency, but during my early manhood he was engaged in his great work. As physically, by reason of his height, he could look down on a crowd, so his moral elevation enabled him, while clearly perceiving the present thought of the people, to look above that and see that which the higher life of the nation demanded and which it was possible to attain. By his debates with Douglas he lost the Senatorship, but he gained the Presidency, and was thus given to real[illegible] in his life the prophetic w[illegible] Daniel Webster: "Lib[illegible] nd now [illegible]

Mr. Lincoln's manner always. You see it in all his letters and speeches. He was utterly unselfish, and in that trait of his character he teaches the lesson which every one may apply. There was not the least of rudeness or roughness which is sometimes attributed to him. His bearing and manner was that of an unaffected gentleman.

EDWARD E. HALE.

By President Hadley, of Yale.

It has always seemed to me that among all our public men Lincoln was most thoroughly representative of what was best for the American people. It is just because of this representative character of his life and his work that he has taken the profoundest hold.

ARTHUR T. HADLEY.

By Andrew Carnegie.

As head of the Telegraphers' Military Corps I saw Lincoln often when in Washington shortly after his inauguration. He has sat by my side while I telegraphed for him. Better than any other man I have ever seen, he deserves the title, "A genius." Arriving in Washington a plain, self-educated man of the West, he soon dominated the Cabinet and every man he came in contact with. Statesmen, orators, naval and military officials, all had to bow to the Western genius; and his heart was as tender as his brain was wise, and he won all men by his sterling honesty of purpose. He is far and away the greatest figure of modern times.

ANDREW CARNEGIE.

Taft, William H.

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States

HEADQUARTERS COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

President of the United States

Born February 12, 1809.
Died April 15, 1865.

"Lincoln came up from the soil. He was one of the plain people. He lived and dressed and ate and spoke as they did, and in early life seemed to have many of the defects and failings that they had. His superficial exterior was rough and apparently unrefined. He had ambitions, as other men. He used and cultivated the art of politics as they did, and it was difficult for those who knew him and who came close to him to realize the greatness of his character and intellect and the other exceptional qualities that differentiated him from his fellows.

"Those traits in him, which now place him with Washington, and with Washington alone, did not make themselves clearly manifest and were not fully developed until the trials of the four years of our awful Civil War. In that supreme test he threw off such dross as his early life may have shown and the gold of his great character and intellect shone forth in its purity.

"Lincoln's intellectual honesty and his great sympathetic, human heart, were his two great and highest attributes, because from them flowed all his other qualities."

Hon. Wm. H. Taft.

Taft, William H.

Abraham Lincoln

By William H. Taft

(Quoted from Cosmopolitan Magazine)

It seems to me, as I study the life of Lincoln, that in his development and the position to which he attained there is more inspiration for heroism and usefulness to the country than in the life of any other one man in history. He had his weaknesses, like others. His education was faulty. But by a certain sort of intellectual discipline, by self-education, he clarified his methods of thought and expression so that he was able to meet every problem presented by a solution as simple as it was effective. The responsibility which he had to assume when he came to the Presidency was awful to contemplate, and the proverbial sadness of his features it is easy to understand. The criticism and abuse to which he was subjected in the crises of the Civil War one is ashamed to review as a matter of history. And yet it is of the utmost value in the encouragement of others that they may not be borne down by the weight of hostile and persistent criticism.

LINCOLN—1865.

Mr. Lincoln's biographer and partner, Judge Herndon, raises a question as to whether love made up a part of Lincoln's nature. He suggests that his consideration and charity resulted rather from his sense of justice. I don't know that such a discussion is profitable. Certain it is that we have never had in public life a man whose sense of duty was stronger, whose bearing toward those with whom he came in contact, whether his friends or political opponents, was characterized by a greater sense of fairness. And we have never had in public life a man who took upon himself uncomplainingly the woes of the nation and suffered in his soul from the weight of them as he did, nor in all our history a man who had such a mixture of far-sightedness, of understanding of the people, of common sense, of high sense of duty, of power, of inexorable logic, and of confidence in the goodness of God in working out a righteous result as had this great product of the soil of our country.

One cannot read of Abraham Lincoln without loving him. One cannot think of his struggles, of his life and its tragic end, without weeping. One cannot study his efforts, his conscience, his heroism, his patriotism, and the burdens of bitter attack and calumny under which he suffered, and think of the place he now occupies in the history of this country, without a moral inspiration of the most stirring and intense character.

1920

Taft, William H.

Abraham Lincoln

By William H. Taft

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LINCOLN LORE

No. 48 FORT WAYNE, INDIANA March 10, 1930

LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of The Lincoln Historical Research Foundation

Endowed By The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company

Dr. Louis A. Warren - - - Editor

TAFT'S TRIBUTE TO LINCOLN

The late William Howard Taft was the principal speaker at the dedicatory services of the Lincoln memorial building at Hodgenville, Kentucky, on November 11, 1911. As president of the United States, he paid a tribute to Abraham Lincoln, who was born in the log cabin enclosed by the memorial building. The following excerpts from his address are copied from a booklet published in 1921 by the editor of Lincoln Lore which gives the remarks of Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson, on their visits to the birthplace of the emancipator.

The President's Speech

"There is nothing so fascinating on the one hand and nothing so difficult on the other as tracing by heredity the developments of genius and real greatness. Perhaps this is because there are so few instances in history that prompt the search. The explanation of Lincoln and his wonderful character from his origin and environment is almost as difficult as the explanation of Shakespeare; but the passion of the world grows for more intimate knowledge of his personality and a deeper inquiry into the circumstances of his wonderful life.

"No year passes that something more is not written of him, and testimonials in loving mercy and interest increase. The nation itself, has yet to embody in marble or bronze its widened appreciation of him as its savior. Nothing of his characteristics is too incidental for those who study over again his great speeches and messages and trace again the amazing story from the lowly home in Kentucky whence he sprang to the height of his glory in his martyrdom.

"It is eminently appropriate that the farm where Lincoln was born should come into public possession and should have erected on it a suitable memorial in which to preserve mementoes of his personality and biographies of his life.

"He says he never received any education except reading and writing and arithmetic to the rule of three; but he had access to books, and, whether he kept a store or acted as a flatboatman on the Mississippi or finally came to study law, he read the books he had thoroughly and they included the Bible and Shakespeare.

"One of his biographers who knew him well, says that after he had finished this small library, he read some but he thought much more. He thought of what he read, and he exercized his intellect by constant practice till he made his logical processes an instrument to search truth and analyze facts that has rarely been equaled by anyone.

"His evident sympathy for the colored race, his roused sense of justice in their behalf, his earnest passions to secure them freedom and equality of opportunity, had their inspiration in the sufferings and limitations of his own early life.

"He was not slow, but he was cautious, deliberate, attentive, as befitted one who insisted on establishing every proposition that he adhered to by original reasoning from fundamental postulates. The lucidity and clearness of his thought manifested itself in the simplicity, directness and clearness of his style. He had imagination and he loved poetry. He had the rhythm of languages, and though purely self-educated, these circumstances developed a power of literary expression that the world and especially the literary world has come fully to recognize and enjoy.

"Humor he used in his conversation, stories of humor he told, as he said once, to enable him to deny requests or to express difference of opinion without abruptness and without hurting the feelings of his petitioner. But humor he rarely introduced into his carefully prepared speeches or his messages. A serious aspect on the subject he was discussing and his intense earnestness in framing the reasons for his conclusions so as to impress its justice on the reader or the listener, prevented him from the use of wit or humor, though it was always at his command.

"He was a lawyer, and a good one. He studied his cases hard, and he prepared his arguments with the force and cleverness that might have been expected from one of his mental makeup. His mind was luminous with truth. His conscience was governed by devotion to right, and the tenderness of his heart was only restrained by his intellect and his conscience. His determination to see both sides and reason out conflicting arguments to a satisfactory conclusion, made him tolerant and patient beyond conception.

"The story of his dealings with McClellan, with the members of his Cabinet, and with others unconscious of the great genius and heart with whom they were in personal touch, exasperates the sympathetic reader and arouses a protest that vents itself in contempt toward many of those who surrounded him and yet did not measure the great nature they were privileged to know. The diary of his Cabinet officers show how under his very nose and generally with his clear conception of it, political combinations were formed, only to be dissolved and fall harmless through the patient tact of this master of men, this greatest of diplomats.

"When he came to the Presidency he had only experience of two terms in the Legislature, of one term in Congress, of the political discussions and debates in the interior districts and of the great debate with Douglas. He had no training at all in administrative matters, and when they were presented to him the awful task which the threatened secession of the Southern States presented he had to feel his way.

"In the outset Mr. Lincoln encountered the difficulties that fall to the lot of any responsible head of a Government; difficulties which are intensified by the greatness of the issues at hand, but which all have the same charactristics when they arise from the overzeal of moral reformers. Those who wished slavery abolished felt toward Mr. Lincoln a greater degree of hatred and contempt during the two years of his administration than even the rebels themselves. Brooking no delay, accepting every excuse as a mere pretext, they pounced upon Mr. Lincoln with emphatic denunciation and bitter attack, but he knew better than they what was necessary before he took the step of emancipation they were pressing.

"He knew better than they the loss of support he would suffer in the border States. He knew better than they that he must delay until the emancipation proclamation could be issued, not to break up slavery, but to effect a constitutional amendment, but only for military reasons and with military purposes and so he bared his breast to the shafts of criticism from the most important element of the Republican party and waited. No man in public life was ever so much abused as Lincoln. The contrast between his position in history today and the description of him by his friendly critics during the Civil War can hardly be credited.

"The great reason for the present memorial is the constant reminder it furnishes of the unexplained and unexplainable growth and development, from the humblest and homeliest soil, of Lincoln's genius, intellect, heart and character that have commanded the gratitude of his countrymen for the good he worked with them and awakened the love and devoted administration of a world."

Tallman, George K.

George K. Tallman

JANESVILLE—(AP)—George K. Tallman, 76, who recently donated an 18-room pre-Civil war mansion to the city for a museum, died Saturday.

Mr. Tallman was the owner of extensive timber lands and real estate, a University of Wisconsin law school graduate, and a 32nd degree Mason and Knights Templar.

The mansion which he gave the city was built in the 1840s by his grandfather, W. M. Tallman, at a cost of $40,000.

He is survived by his wife and a nephew, W. B. Tallman, Racine. Funeral services will be held Tuesday.

Million Dollar Estate Is Given To Charities

JANESVILLE, Wis. —(AP)— The one-million dollar estate of timber magnate George K. Tallman will be used for benevolent, charitable, religious and educational purposes.

In addition to extensive timber lands, Tallman owned many principal business district properties in Janesville. He died July 8 at the age of 76 and his will was filed Thursday in Rock county court.

Figures contained in the petition show real estate value in excess of $400,000 and personal property in excess of $250,000. Provision is made for a monthly income of $1,000 to Tallman's widow during her lifetime, and a $5,000 bequest to William Bump Tallman, Racine, a nephew.

The estate is to be placed in perpetual trust with the First National bank of Janesville given unlimited powers to distribute income to organizations or for purposes qualifying as tx exempt. A $25,000 revolving fund for loans to students is set up.

Tallman on June 27 signed deeds conveying to the city of Janesville the historic Tallman mansion where Abraham Lincoln was an overnight guest in 1859. The property will be converted into a museum and turned over to the Rock County Historical society.

Tarbell, Ida M.

LINCOLN ON SAME PLANE AS GOD, SAYS SPEAKER

"Abraham Lincoln was a brave man, made on the same plane with God," said Miss Ida M. Tarbell, famous publicist and journalist, in an address on "The Development of Abraham Lincoln," at the community vesper service of the First Presbyterian church last evening.

"Lincoln developed in a manner which showed that he had an extraordinary flexibility of mind," declared Miss Tarbell. "He went to Washington with only the idea of being president and doing that work which he had dreamed of in his boyhood and in his early days as a young attorney. His work was to be the freeing of the slaves from bondage, but almost immediately he found a war on his hands and the issue had changed. His work was not only to free men from bondage, but to preserve the unity of a nation.

"He had the almost miraculous gift of making people honestly see the difference between right and wrong. He never lost sight of or faltered for an instant in his task of preserving America. Towards this end he was willing to co-operate with anyone, even with bad men, if the end seemed likely to help in the strengthening of the union.

"The way in which he handled men is one of the most extraordinary examples of leadership this or any country ever saw. He was able to bend the most obstinate men of his generation to his will with seeming ease. As we follow him in the days of the great struggle, we see him building on a higher plane from day to day. His work becomes almost a religion.

"As the war went on he asked himself, 'Why must this terrible killing of men go on?' We see his compassion for the suffering and trials of the nation in every one of his acts and words. Lincoln saw that it was the will of Almighty God which must be carried out even through tribulations which rocked the social fabric of the nation.

"Men say that he was raised up by God to meet the great issues which would have dismayed any other man. This seems almost like profanity to me. God has planted in man the possibility of being almost infinite in his works. The union of the whole world will only come through struggle and tears and tolerance just as it did in America."

Tarbell, Ida M.

The Fortunate Boy

2/9/24

by Ida M. Tarbell in Collier's

Peekskill N.Y. Highland Democrat

HOW devoid of understanding is he that pities Abraham Lincoln's youth! It was so hard, we say, so meager and ugly—no comforts, no hair mattress, no electric light, no free library, no ready-made clothes. We rehearse what we know he did not have, but fail to see what he did have.

The real boy Lincoln was not he who slept in the loft of a log cabin through whose chinks the snow may sometimes have sifted; it was the boy who came home after a long day's work with glowing eyes, hugging to his heart a book—a borrowed book—who did his chores almost unconsciously, his mind on the joy that awaited him. What mattered it to him that he must gather chips and shavings to keep the logs flaming, if he would have a light to read by? He had a book to read, and he read it until sleep overtook the household, and then carried it up to bed that at the break of day it might be within his reach.

The real boy was not he who struggled with plow or ax or flatboat rudder; it was he who while working rehearsed over and over the passages that he had read the night before, making them his own. It was the boy who as he traveled the furrow visualized George Washington, Valley Forge, the crossing of the Delaware, who learned to declaim the "Great Declaration"—a thing born so close to his own time that no disappointing experiences had yet chilled its noble phrases. To him there was a quality of truth, of possible realization in the famous document which thrilled and ennobled him. The real boy Lincoln was the one who, in those days we call so hard, carried with him a faith in the possibility of freedom and opportunity for all men, a faith which grew as he toiled.

He is not the one to be pitied. Pity the boy who, surrounded by all the thousands of volumes which rehearse the making and interpret the meaning of the Declaration of Independence, has never yet caught its vision or felt the fire of its inspiration.

His Craving for Books.

He must walk far for the book—beg it from neighbors who knew him, build acquaintance with strangers into confidence sufficient to borrow. Pity him for that? He had to learn a great thing—that the book is worth the price—any price. What did he grudge that brought him Bobby Burns or Aesop or Plutarch or the Constitution of the United States, or a collection of the strange and changing laws of men—that brought him anything that dealt with the workings of men's hearts and minds?

Pity the book hunter! What if the chase was long, the path hard, the footwear worn, the coat of homespun—what was all that to him? It was the quarry, not the way, of which he thought. A book in hand, he walked homeward with the man he had found—Jefferson, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Defoe—and for days, whatever came, cold, short rations, hard labor, Jefferson, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Defoe was by his side.

No, this boy is not to be pitied, but rather he who has never longed for a book, never walked a mile to borrow one—he who when a book is by his side can keep his hands from it, who can live among books daily, incurious, unacquainted.

The boy Lincoln did not read for forgetfulness. The book was not a sedative, a soporific for him. It did not take him out of Spencer county, Indiana, but rather helped him to understand Spencer county. It interpreted to him the thing of which he and Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, and all of these neighbors and friends of theirs, were a part.

Read to Remember.

The pioneer life had its excitements and allurements — discovery, danger, hope lifted it out of the commonplace. Young Lincoln shared all this; and the book told him, as those about him could not, the meaning, the reasons, behind it all. It traced the path that a long line of forbears had traveled westward— their sacrifices, their hopes! Through the book he saw southwestern Indiana and its people as a scene in a great and noble drama—saw its relation to the opening of the new continent, the upbuilding of a new kind of government, the founding of something which would admit more and more men to the opportunities of the earth.

The book did something else for him—it helped him to understand human beings. His curiosity about them was insatiate — their ways, their thoughts, their passions, their meannesses, their nobilities. The boy Lincoln saw wide ranges of human material—a few men of education; many men of patient, steady, daily labor—reverent, believing men; he saw those of riotous life, and not a few of men of petty living—dirty habits, physical and mental. He shirked no man. He was curiously impersonal in his contacts with men. He sought to know them—and the book helped him. Aesop, Bunyan, Burns, Shakespeare—all of them helped him understand the men of Spencer county, Indiana. He loved and sought the book because of the light and understanding it gave to life.

Do not pity him because he had no steadier glow to read by than that of blazing logs—rather rejoice that he read!

Tarbell Ida M.

Tarbell, Ida M.

TRIBUTES TO LINCOLN

BENEFIT FOR UNIVERSITY.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell Chief Speaker at Metropolitan Opera House.

General Benjamin F. Tracy presided at the benefit for the Lincoln Memorial University at Cumberland Gap, Tenn., in the Metropolitan Opera House yesterday afternoon. General O. O. Howard, who has been working for the success of the university, was on the stage at his side. Among the guests were Rear Admiral Goodrich (retired), William L. Stooksbury, president of the university; Joseph H. Choate, Colonel Augustus P. Dunlop, General Horace Porter and Commander A. V. Wadhams. The musical programme included numbers by the New York Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Walter Damrosch, and violin solos by Albert Spalding.

A detachment from the 12th Infantry, at Governor's Island, under command of Captain Alvin C. Read, was present, having marched from the elevated station at Sixth avenue and 42d street to the opera house.

Monsignor Lavelle, who represented Archbishop Farley, said that, in behalf of the two million Roman Catholics in the diocese, he joined heartily in the cause. He referred to the part played by officers and men of his Church in the Civil War, and said that the Church could do nothing better now than to imbue the rising generation with the spirit of patriotism that was bound up in the character of Lincoln. He said that, without the glamour of military life, the people to-day were too prone to forget the Christian and manly virtues of Lincoln.

"Long may his memory, rich, strong and self-sacrificing, survive in the hearts of the American people," he said; "long may his sentiments of determination and firmness in the right, his feeling of charity to all, of malice to none, survive in the hearts of the American people."

Miss Ida M. Tarbell, speaking of the Lincoln centenary celebration, said:

Everywhere in the land—North, South, East and West—in the great universities, in the country schoolhouses, in the cities and the mining camps, in the fashionable girls' schools and the East Side evening classes, some kind of Lincoln celebration has been provided for. Over the desk of almost every teacher in the land there hangs to-day a picture of that kindly, rugged face. From thousands of platforms boys and girls will read the Springfield farewell, the Gettysburg speech, or the last inaugural. And tens of thousands of young hearts, as they hear them, will feel something of the grip of mysterious emotion which we all feel as we listen.

The centenary is being celebrated pre-eminently by the young, and curiously enough it is being done without concert or forethought. It is a spontaneous, universal expression of the conviction which lies deep in every American heart—that this man is the best of us, the finest thing we have yet done in the way of producing a man, the worthiest model we have for the young of the country. He is the best of us—the best in the way he looked at life, fitted himself for it, lived it.

We all know the one-room cabin, the home-made furniture, the clothing, the struggle for food. But you may look from the beginning to the end of the records of Abraham Lincoln's life to find a word of complaint or self-pity because of that meagreness. "Pretty pinching times" is the most that he ever said of the poverty of his early life. No one need weep over the fact that Abraham Lincoln was born in a log hut, was probably sometimes hungry and did not have access to a circulating library. He never did. He had a hard beginning, out of which he extracted many things—a cheeerful, sensible philosophy of life, a power of clear and logical thinking, a command of pure English, a superior skill in estimating and handling men and a capacity for steady growth.

Miss Tarbell related some of the stories of Lincoln's career to substantiate this estimate of his character. The insults to which he was subjected by Stanton and others never influenced him when the good of country was at stake. She said, adding:

It is not to be supposed that Lincoln was insensible to insults like that of Stanton at Cincinnati; to superciliousness such as Seward showed at the opening of the administration. There is evidence enough that he was entirely conscious of the limitations of his education, entirely conscious of the difference in general culture and address between him and many of his Washington associates. But no one had a juster sense of the relative importance of things—or planted himself more firmly on the proposition that character and intellectual integrity outweigh the manner and the address. He took men for what they really were, and he quietly compelled them to take him in the same way. The result was that Lincoln grouped about him in the Civil War an extraordinary collection of different kinds of men, and before he was through he had the devotion and reverence of them all.

General Howard told several stories of Lincoln to illustrate his deep religious nature. The Gettysburg address was read by General James R. O'Beirne. "America" and "The Star Spangled Banner" were sung by the audience, standing.

The receipts of the benefit were $6,646.

N.Y.T. 2/10/09

Tarbell, Ida M.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1923.

Abe Lincoln the Fortunate Boy

Ida M. Tarbell in Collier's Weekly.

HOW devoid of understanding is he that pities Abraham Lincoln's youth! It was so hard, we say, so meager and ugly—no comforts, no hair mattress, no electric light, no free library, no ready-made clothes. We rehearse what we know he did not have, but fail to see what he did have.

The real boy Lincoln was not he who slept in the loft of a log cabin through whose chinks the snow may sometimes have sifted; it was the boy who came home after a long day's work with glowing eyes, hugging to his heart a book—a borrowed book—who did his chores almost unconsciously, his mind on the joy that awaited him. What mattered it to him that he must gather chips and shavings to keep the logs flaming, if he would have a light to read by? *He had a book to read*, and he read it until sleep overtook the household, and then carried it up to bed that at the break of day it might be within his reach.

The real boy was not he who struggled with plow or ax or flatboat rudder; it was he who while working rehearsed over and over the passages that he had read the night before, making them his own. It was the boy who as he traveled the furrow visualized George Washington, Valley Forge, the Crossing of the Delaware, who learned to declaim the "Great Declaration"—a thing born so close to his own time that no disappointing experiences had yet chilled its noble phrases. To him there was a quality of truth, of possible realization in the famous document which thrilled and enobled him. The real boy Lincoln was the one who, in those days we call so hard, carried with him a faith in the possibility of freedom and opportunity for all men, a faith which grew as he toiled.

NOT ONE TO BE PITIED.

He is not the one to be pitied. Pity the boy who, surrounded by all the thousands of volumes which rehearse the making and interpret the meaning of the Declaration of Independence, has never yet caught its vision or felt the fire of its inspiration.

He must walk far for the book—beg it from neighbors who knew him, build acquaintance with strangers into confidence sufficient to borrow. Pity him for *that?* He had to learn a great thing—that the book is worth the price—any price. What did he grudge that brought him Bobby Burns or Aesop or Plutarch or the Constitution of the United States, or a collection of the strange and changing laws of men—that brought him anything that dealt with the workings of men's hearts and minds?

His desire carried him across fields and over rough trails to Boonville, twenty miles away; to Rockport, as far, and to many a distant home of educated English settlers, of southern men or of those who had followed the long trail of his own family from the Atlantic Coast, through Virginia and Kentucky, into Southwestern Indiana. Wherever he knew of man or woman who had or might have a book, he wormed his way. He scented a book, trailed it, worried it out of its hole. His hunter's nose and tirelessness became known far and wide and won him friends among men of parts. They knew a living mind when they met it, understood its hunger, strove to feed it, grew to respect him, to go out of their way to put the book in his way.

Pity the book hunter! What if the chase was long, the path hard, the footwear worn, the coat of homespun—what was all that to him? It was the quarry, not the way, of which he thought. A book in hand, he walked homeward with the man he had found—Jefferson, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Defoe—and for days, whatever came, cold, short rations, hard labor, Jefferson, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Defoe was by his side.

REJOICE THAT HE READ.

No, this boy is not to be pitied, but rather he who has never longed for a book, never walked a mile to borrow one—he who when a book is by his side can keep his hands from it, who can live among books daily, incurious, unacquainted.

The boy Lincoln did not read for forgetfulness. The book was not a sedative, a soporific for him. It did not take him out of Spencer County, Indiana, but rather helped him to understand Spencer County. It interpreted to him the thing of which he and Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks Lincoln, and all of these neighbors and friends of theirs, were apart.

The pioneer life had its excitements and allurements — discovery, danger, hope lifted it out of the commonplace. Young Lincoln shared all this; and the book told him, as those about him could not, the meaning, the reasons, behind it all. It traced the path that a long line of forbears had traveled westward—their sacrifices, their hopes! Through the book he saw Southwestern Indiana and its people as a scene in a great and noble drama—saw its relation to the opening of the new continent, the upbuilding of a new kind of government, the founding of something which would admit more and more men to the opportunities of the earth.

The book did something else for him—it helped him to understand human beings. His curiosity about them was insatiate—their ways, their thoughts, their passions, their meannesses, their nobilities. The boy Lincoln saw wide ranges of human material—a few men of education; many men of patient, steady, daily labor—reverent, believing men; he saw those of riotous life, and not a few men of petty living—dirty habits, physical and mental. He shirked no man. He was curiously impersonal in his contacts with men. He sought to know them—and the book helped him. Aesop, Bunyan, Burns, Shakespeare—all of them helped him understand the men of Spencer County, Indiana. He loved and sought the book because of the light and understanding it gave to life.

Do not pity him because he had no steadier glow to read by than that of blazing logs—rather rejoice that he read!

Descendants of General Lee and Julia Ward Howe at Lincoln Memorial Exercises.

Among the young women who will act as ushers at Lincoln memorial exercises in New York City's town hall today are Miss Mary Lee Brousseau, grandniece of Gen. Robert E. Lee, and Miss Julia Ward Howe Hall, great-granddaughter of Julia Ward Howe. They are shown above, Miss Brousseau at the right.

Tarbell, Ida M.

NATION NEEDS LINCOLNS.

Will Be Sad Day For America When It Fails to Produce Such Men.

At a public dinner in New York, in commemoration of Lincoln, Miss Ida M. Tarbell, author of a "Life of Lincoln," spoke as follows: 1910

"I think I can say Abraham Lincoln is the only man, living or dead, with whom I could have spent five years and not known boredom.

"Lincoln was a man who never pretended to be anything he really was not. He never found time to conform to the usages of society. He did not understand or care for its amenities. He never learned to wear his clothes properly. His trousers bagged. His coats did not fit.

"You may remember the eminent Massachusetts statesman who spent an hour with Lincoln, and the only entry he made in his journal after their discussion of great national affairs was that Lincoln wore yarn socks.

"Lincoln always was anxious to get things just right. Sometimes, in consequence, he seemed slow to the country, but he always insisted with himself that his acts must conform to the moral law. You cannot conceive of Lincoln trifling with his conscience.

"He wanted to be sure always that his decisions should ever stand as just in the annals of the world and the history of human endeavor.

"There are several instances to prove this. He was told by his supporters he would lose an election by taking a certain stand. He did lose, but he said: 'We are right. The people will recognize it by and by.' And they did, and four years later he was in the White House.

"Lincoln had real goodness—not the kind of goodness that preaches only on Sunday, but the kind of goodness that reaches out and embraces all one's fellow men. He was the tenderest man that ever lived. No one suffered more than he during the awful four years of civil strife.

"Lincoln was the best man American institutions ever produced. It would be, indeed, a sad thing if our institutions failed at any future great crisis to produce such as Lincoln."

J WRIGHT

arbell, Ida M.

"KING LINCOLN," AS HIS MANY CRITICS NAMED HIM

Arbitrary Arrests by Overzealous Officers Made Much Trouble—The Case of Vallandigham

"IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN"

By IDA M. TARBELL

The charge of despotism hurled at Lincoln continuously in the dark and doubtful days between Antietam and Gettysburg was based on three counts: The first, his action in regard to slavery—it was arbitrary and unconstitutional. Lincoln's reply to this charge was quoted in our last chapter, where we also glanced at some of the fresh difficulties that the action brought him.

The second count on which he was found guilty was what he characterized as his "arrests, banishments and assessments." To understand his reasons for permitting these, the condition of things at the start of the Rebellion must be recalled.

Twelve days after the firing on Sumter, the President suspended the writ of habeas corpus between Washington and Philadelphia. A little later this suspension was applied to Florida, and then extended as far as New York city; later still, to Bangor, Me.

The Title of King

But he did not like it, and in February of '62, just after Stanton came in as the head of the War Department, he withdrew the order and declared a general amnesty to political prisoners.

In the months that followed this general release of political prisoners things grew worse as we have seen. There was the defeat of the armies, there was his failure to persuade the border States to adopt compensated emancipation, a new and more vigorous policy was necessary, and as a first measure he issued his preliminary emancipation proclamation, an act that brought upon him a serious charge of unconstitutionality and earned him the title of "King Lincoln."

Two days after the Emancipation Proclamation came a sweeping suspension of the writ of habeas corpus "as long as the insurrection should endure." The chief reason given was that it had "become necessary to call into service not only volunteers, but also a portion of the militia of the States by draft, in order to suppress the insurrection existing in the United States, and disloyal persons are not adequately restrained by the ordinary processes of law from hindering this measure."

Resorting to the Draft

This drafting of men into service was the third count against Lincoln—to many minds the most despotic of the changes he was making in his policy in order to secure a more vigorous and effective prosecution of the war.

Congress and the administration began to discuss the advisability of making a National law, and as early as August of '62 Lincoln wrote to a foreign correspondent and sympathizer not to be alarmed if he heard that the North had resorted to a draft.

But if there was a popular demand for the draft, there was a louder popular protest against it, and throughout the Summer and Fall of '62 all sorts of interferences and outbreaks occurred. In Pennsylvania the malcontents went so far as to attempt to prevent drafted men who had themselves accepted the situation from leaving their homes.

This open interference was, of course, met by wholesale arrests and imprisonments, allowed by the suspension of the habeas corpus writ.

Too Zealous Stanton

Now, if Lincoln himself could have decided who should and should not be arrested, we can believe that there would have been few orders. But it was not Abraham Lincoln who was arresting them, it was Secretary Stanton, it was the military commanders. Stanton was suspicious, hot-tempered, vindictive, and where he found any trace of disloyalty he was quick to order a man behind the bars.

There were many of the Generals whose loyalty was of the same passionate kind. There were others with an overgrown sense of power and a joy in exercising it. And in many places factions were at work, willing to use the power of arrest and punishment in order to get a rival out of the way, to discredit opponents.

A new burden was put on Lincoln's shoulders by foolish, personal and vindictive applications of the law.

Pacifist Vallandigham

Although there were many thousand military arrests during the war—just how many has never, so far as I know, been satisfactorily settled—the only really spectacular case was that of Clement L. Vallandigham of Ohio.

Vallandigham was a leader of that branch of the Democratic party that took pride in its title of "Copperhead" and wore that vindictive emblem on the lapel of its coat. He was in Congress when the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, and celebrated the event by one of the bitterest speeches that was made by the opposition.

His cry was to make an armistice, accept foreign mediation, secure peace. Then, as he proclaimed, the Union would be the Union as it was.

Vallandigham's bitterness was intensified by the adoption by Congress in March of '63 of a law giving the Government the power to raise an Army directly; that is, not through the States, as so far had been the practice.

The act declared that all "able-bodied male citizens between the ages of 20 and 45, and persons of foreign birth who had declared their intention to become citizens," could be called by draft into the Army.

Arrested by Burnside

It was a law, however, and the President arranged for its enforcement. Those who opposed its operation could, of course, be taken care of summarily because of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus.

When the 37th Congress adjourned in March of '63 Vallandigham went back to Ohio, where he had a big following, and began an active and bitter campaign against the Administration. Now his State, along with Indiana and Illinois, was included in the military Department of the Ohio, which, at the moment, was under the direction of Gen Ambrose Burnside.

At the beginning of '63 a Democratic mass meeting was held at Mt Vernon, O, with Vallandigham as the chief speaker.

Burnside, knowing of the meeting, sent two officers in civilian clothes to take notes. What they brought back convinced the General that there had been treasonable utterances, and without consultation with any authority he sent a company of soldiers on a special train to Dayton, where Vallandigham lived, and ordered his arrest.

A military trial of an irregular sort was held and Vallandigham found guilty of "publicly expressing sympathy for those in arms against the Government of the United States." His sentence was close confinement during the continuance of the war.

Valuable as Martyr

When the news of his high-handed performance reached the Cabinet in Washington there was general dismay.

The way that Lincoln saw Burnside through with it was to commute the sentence which had been pronounced upon Vallandigham. "The President directs," he wrote Burnside, "that without delay you send C. L. Vallandigham under secure guard to the headquarters of Gen Rosecrans, to be put by him beyond our military lines."

And this was done. Lincoln, realizing that Vallandigham in a United States prison would be a most uncomfortable martyr to deal with, had sent him to those for whom he had professed sympathy. It was a turn to the unfortunate case which aroused the humor of the country and made it more difficult for Vallandigham's party to use it as capital.

Public Won Over

He was no less successful a little later in the adroit way in which he handled a group of Vallandigham's political supporters in Ohio. A big committee was formed there—a man from each Congressional district—to go to Washington to argue further with him about the error of his ways.

He told the gentlemen that he would release Vallandigham, without asking any pledge, if the members of the committee that had come to him would put their names to three propositions, duplicate copies of which he sent to each one. These propositions were:

"(1) That there is now a rebellion in the United States, the object and tendency of which is to destroy the National Union; and that, in your opinion, an army and navy are constitutional means for suppressing that rebellion;

"(2) That no one of you will do anything which, in his own judgment, will tend to hinder the increase, or favor the decrease, or lessen the efficiency of the army or navy while engaged in the effort to suppress that rebellion; and

"(3) That each of you will, in his sphere, do all he can to have the officers, soldiers and seamen of the army and navy, while engaged in the effort to suppress the rebellion, paid, fed, clad, and otherwise well provided for and supported."

Putting Them in the Wrong

As soon as they had indorsed the above he proposed to publish them, and that publication, he told them, would be a revocation of the order in relation to Mr Vallandigham.

Here was a dilemma! Whichever horn of it they took, the President won —refuse to sign it and they wrote themselves down as against the vigorous prosecution of the war; sign it and they admited that the President's position in regard to military arrests was correct.

The people saw the point, applauded its humor and its wisdom. It was common sense, people said; you could not get around it. It was a strong element in bringing about the overwhelming defeat of the sympathizers of Vallandigham in the next Ohio election.

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Tarbell, Ida M.

'Durable Questions'

By Ida M. Tarbell

It is just 60 years since Feb. 12, the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, became a venerated date for the American people. Its first coming after his assassination in April, 1865, was observed by a few, but each passing year the observance has become more general, more impressive.

We get more out of it now—not more of eloquent eulogy or more exhaustive interpretation, but more realization of how much the man has to teach us about handling ourselves in difficult times—about our attitude of mind toward those who disagree with us—about methods toward those whom we call our enemies—and particularly about the nature of questions involving human relations such as the slavery question—the questions which are the foundations of what we call politics and which we are apt to complicate and muddle because we forget that being human relations they must be dealt with according to the laws of human nature.

Each recurring birthday takes the reader back to Lincoln's letters and speeches, and if he reads in order to understand better the man's mind he is sure to come upon phrases as pertinent today as when they were written. There is his characterization of slavery as a "durable question"—something having its roots in the past, tied up with century-old traditions and practices, only to be loosened by generations of effort.

Hasty and narrow minds sought immediate drastic solutions, like abolition, and insisting upon them helped, as he warned them it would, to bring war.

When, in spite of him, war came, he still treated it as a "durable question," and when the war was "won" and the amendment making slavery forever unconstitutional in the United States had been passed, he made no hasty generalizations as to the question being forever and finally settled. He knew better.

That is, he was not in the least fooled about the human beings he worked with, particularly those that made up the congress of the United States, and who in his day, as in ours, went out of their way to keep alive every hateful human emotion let loose by war. He was not fooled by them, nor was he afraid, nor did he hesitate. "We must begin with and mold from disorganized and discordant elements," he told the Washington crowd as it swayed about him for the last time, seeking his mind as to the problems of reconstruction.

That is, here was a man wise enough to know that there are no quick cures for men, that all their questions of human relations are "durable." His phrase is as good today in matters both international and domestic as it was when he coined it in 1858.

Ida M. Tarbell

[Author of The Life of Abraham Lincoln]

Milwaukee Journal

2/12/25

COPY

130 EAST NINETEENTH STREET

January 30, 1923.

Mr. George Hambrecht,
Madison, Wisc.

Dear Mr. Hambrecht:

I was wrong about the date of your address, had counted on it for the 12th of February. I have been so busy that I have been putting off everything. I hope the following will not come amiss:

There are many things that one might say of Abraham Lincoln, suitable as a message of greeting to such a body as the Loyal Legion of Wisconsin. Indeed almost anything of his or about him, if it is true, is dear to honest Americans, What is it that he has to give us most worth while in a period of distraction and disorganization such as we are going through? I hear people asking constantly, what would Lincoln have done in our place? Constantly backing up argument with quotations from his letters and speeches. There seems not to be a cause which does not try to strengthen itself through him.

It is a conscious tribute to the faith that people have in him. But many of us who quote him fail to get from him the real help he has to give. It is not his opinion on a particular subject, not his wit and wisdom as expressed in his letters and speeches which are his great contribution; it is from the temper with which he approached his problems, the methods by which he handled them that we can learn most. His life is a call to self-training - of training of the mind until it can form sound workmanlike, trustworthy conclusions, training of the moral nature to justice and rightness - training of the will until it can be counted on to back up the conclusions of the mind and heart. It is a call to openness of mind, willingness to learn.

His method is a constant lesson in liberality towards others, to a recognition that there may be something to be said of the other man's point of view as well as of yours, that you no more see all the truth than he does, and that if what each of you see can be fused, a larger amount of truth will result. Above all, his method is a revelation of what a man can make out of himself if he will. Indeed I am sometimes inclined

to feel that the greatest service Lincoln has done this country was to demonstrate what could be made of a mind by passionate, persistent effort. What moral heights the nature would rise to if dealt with in perfect candor,

Taking him all in all, it is doubtful if this country or any country has produced a man so worthy of our studying and following as is Abraham Lincoln.

I hope, my dear Mr. Hambrecht, that the above is somewhat near what you want. Of course you are entirely at liberty to cut it or not to use it if it does not fit your purpose.

With many regrets for my delay, believe me

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Ida M Tarbell

Long Beach Press-Telegram 2-11-1935

Dr. Taubman Gives Talk on Lincoln

Comparison of Presidents Made in First Christian Church Sermon.

Abraham Lincoln's place of birth, and his years of early training respectively in Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana, fitted him specially to become a leader of the American people at the time he came in the scene of action, it was said by Dr. George P. Taubman, pastor of First Christian Church, in his sermon on Lincoln last night. He said:

"Lincoln's enemies have done their best to besmirch his name. They have tried to fasten illegitimacy on him and on his mother. Of course, a good many things will be acknowledged. He lived in a time when irreligion was the rule. Immorality and indecency were the rule. He was reared in a coarse and vulgar air. He was very unfamiliar with the unrefined things, and these showed their influence on his life. Someone has called him, "the jester with a tear-stained cheek," for his stories made a contribution in the later years of the war. His name stands out as the greatest name of America. The boys of every people and nation accept him as their ideal. With poor schooling he preserved his name in literature. He may be called an ignoramus, but his Gettysburg address will live as long as the English language. The war and the burdens of the war made a tremendous change in the life of Lincoln. He came out of the first term chastened, and his second inaugural address is a marvelous document. His death was a loss to the North but it was a calamity to the South, for if Lincoln had lived, the sad story of the Reconstruction Days would never have been told.

"The change in his character was brought to pass by his burdens, his worries, and he developed into a Jacob in prayer. He may have been baptized as a boy in Southern Indiana but it is very probable that he never belonged to any religious sect. We see here the value of example in public office. The kingdom of Israel broke down at the top. When her rulers and princes and those of power and wealth offered the example of corruption to the people God turned against them.

"The United States has been fortunate in that most of the Presidents have been very good men. Their families have been without outstanding scandal.

"Many of them have been consistent believers and some of them out and out Christians.

"Some of them have not been so good, although most of them have been church men. Washington's inspiration was in the church in Virginia and in Masonry.

"Jefferson, undoubtedly, was an infidel if not an atheist, and in many ways his example was harmful to the rank and file. Cleveland was a confessed sinner, brave in confession, and the people credited him with manhood.

"The present example is rather discouraging. The rule concerning the use of beer and wines in the White House is not in harmony with past ideals."

Taylor, Alfred A.

Former Governor of Tennessee Praises Greatness of Lincoln

Greatest Man I Ever Looked in the Face, Alfred A. Taylor Tells Tennessee Society Audience

2-12-27

Special from Monitor Bureau

WASHINGTON—"I have seen every President of the United States from Abraham Lincoln to Calvin Coolidge; have had the privilege of knowing some of them personally . . . If you were to ask me to point out the greatest man I ever saw, I would, without a moment's hesitation, point to Abraham Lincoln as the greatest man I ever looked in the face."

These words were spoken by Alfred A. Taylor, former Governor of Tennessee, at a recent meeting of the Tennessee Society in St. Louis, and were printed in the Congressional Record by B. Carroll Reese (R.), Representative from Tennessee. "Lincoln loved peace and hated war," he continued.

Mr. Taylor recalled that he saw Lincoln three times as a boy in his teens at the White House and in Philadelphia where he heard him speak. "I never have forgotten, nor will I ever forget, a statement I heard him make in the conversation at the White House. The Congressman asked for the release of a Confederate brigadier general, a prisoner of war at Fortress Monroe, who had saved his life during the Civil War. Without the return of a word Mr. Lincoln wrote an order to the Secretary of War for the release of the general, and as he handed it to the Congressman he said: 'Some of us may never be able to forget, but all of us must forgive and return to the peaceful walks of life and build up the waste places.'

Adversity and Progress

Referring to the uses of adversity on men of fine character Mr. Taylor said:

"Abraham Lincoln was poorest of them all, and had smaller advantages than any of them. Born as lowly as the Babe of Bethlehem in a log hut in Kentucky, reared to manhood in it and similar huts in Indiana and Illinois, inured to every hardship known to squalid poverty; having to perform every character of drudgery and hard work incident to life in the wilderness, clearing ground for the cultivation of crops and splitting the rails to fence it; working as farm hand in farming time and as a boat hand at odd times; handling heavy freights on the Sangamon and Mississippi Rivers; finally securing a job as a sort of handy man and clerk in the village store, doing all the drudgery, weighing up and storing away every kind of produce given in exchange for goods; and at the same time reading and studying borrowed books, as he had been doing theretofore, in the evenings by the moonlight or by pine-torch light in midnight darkness; at length entering the community debating society and never failing to attend its meeting and to participate in its debates, he, at last, found himself!

Developed Into Forceful Debater

"He developed rapidly into the clearest-headed, best-informed, and most forceful debater of the organization, attracting immediate local attention, and becoming the most popular figure about New Salem. He went through these early struggles without a word of complaint, and came out of them all a physical and intellectual giant, and, above all, 'the noblest work of God, an honest man.' Thus, self-supported, self-educated, and entering young manhood with nothing but brain and muscle to back him, he finally concluded to be a lawyer.

"Training himself for that profession by means of borrowed law books, he succeeded in procuring license and entered the practice, and continued to practice successfully for a quarter of a century. Popular clamor drew him into politics and he entered that field, serving four terms in the Legislature of Illinois and one term in Congress, becoming thereafter a candidate for United States Senator against Stephen A. Douglas. His masterly handling of the issue in his joint debates with Douglas attracted attention nation-wide and made him so exceedingly popular in Illinois that at the election he received a majority of the popular vote of 4000. But the Legislature at that time elected Senators, and Mr. Douglas was elected."

Taylor, Eva G.

BY THE WAY

Los Angeles Times 2-07-26

BY EVA G. TAYLOR

Abraham Lincoln stands out a unique character in the nation's history. We honor all the heroes of our land, but to this grandly simple man is accorded a special place in the hearts of the people. He came in a crisis of our national life and left an indelible mark upon it. Not because it was a crisis. There have been several crises in the world's history and men have been raised up to meet them. We yield them the tribute which is always due greatness wherever found, but the character of Abraham Lincoln is invested with a sort of halo. The thought of him stirs a tender emotion within. Somehow when we think of him we think of the sorrows of the race of men. We never associate him with joy and the brightness of life.

A tribute somewhat out of the usual order was paid him by a former pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y. He said: "Be the reasons what they may, when the Ruler of nations wishes to secure a forward movement of society He has passed by the King's palace in favor of the poor man's house. When God wished a father for the bondsman He went to a log cabin in Kentucky. Calling to His side heaven's favorite angel—the Angel of Suffering—he laid the poor man's child in the arms of the angel and whispered: "O, Sorrow, thou best loved child of heaven and earth, take thou this child and rear him for me and make him great. Plant his feet with thorns, cut his little feet with sharp rocks, load his young back with heavy burdens, pull out of his arms everything that he loves, break his heart a thousand times, like a box of alabaster ointment, until he is strong by burden bearing and sympathetic through suffering to the sigh of any black child."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The tribute with its striking figure of speech is fitting as to Abraham Lincoln. His was a life of early hardship and privation, of later sorrow and tragedy. Yet the poverty and hardships which fill his young life were perhaps ministering angels in disguise, for they helped to form the rugged strength of character and determination that carried him through great crises. There was a profound sadness in his nature underlying the genial and homely humor so characteristic of him. The very sorrows of his heart heightened the humor glints that flashed through his speech. His humor was of a kind that never hurt nor stung. It was the kind that is said to be akin to intuition. It was kindly and genuine like himself.

It was a very whirlpool of contending forces that swirled about him as the ruler of the nation. There were many knotty problems to be solved, many interwoven strands of significant importance to be untangled between the Union and the Confederacy. As the difference became impossible to adjust without civil war the burdens loaded upon his back increased in quantity and weight. They pressed upon his heart until it almost broke with pity for the suffering of those he came to suffering of those who performed rescue from bondage and for rescue work at the high behest of the nation. It might truly be said that his cup overflowed with sorrow. Perhaps that is why we love him. The people we like best to know are not those whose paths in life have been over beds of roses.

While we all crave happiness we nevertheless know that sorrow and trial are often angels of mercy. Suffering brings out the noblest and best in us, or it crushes the spirit. It rounds out and developes character as nothing else can, or it hardens and brutalizes. It all depends upon the material we have to work with at the start. The truly great have suffered at some point or at all points and have become greater thereby. The weak merely succumb.

The experience of the martyred President seems to puncture certain bubbles of psychology affirmations. The "Be good and you'll be happy" philosophy does not work out as it should according to its formulas. Another saying which comes to us with dignity of age seems a bit nearer the truth, namely, "We cannot all be happy but we can all be good." It is doubtful if Abraham Lincoln was ever really happy. There are natures that seem born to sorrow. They begin in early childhood to bear burdens for others and later on are weighted down with care. Something seems to be reflected within the soul as from some past tragic experience. We call them "old children." None of us know what they have locked up within their consciousness. Life usually begins to use them roughly from their cradle days. They must fight their way through seemingly insurmountable difficulties and trials. Then, when they almost grasp the prize they have struggled for, it is snatched from them, or they are snatched from it by death. We say of them, "Fate has used them roughly" and our pity goes out to them. Yet after all, are they to be pitied? Is it not fine to be thus trained by the Angel of Suffering for some high destiny of which we are unconscious during the process of trial? Only the weak and superficial characters are to be pitied.

Heaven's [illegible] character rounded out through the Angel of Sorrow. "Strong by burden bearing, sympathetic through suffering" has a deep meaning for us. Strength and sympathy, nobility and compassion can become a part of character only by means of these scourging angels. The only people really worth while in the last analysis are those who at some time have pased through the fiery furnace. The happy-go-lucky, amiably complacent in a world of suffering and turmoil are not the ones we look to for great achievements. To understand all one must have known all. An altruistic point of view is gained only through suffering. No one really likes to suffer yet the world is full of it. It is filled with all kinds and degrees of sorrow and pain. We think of poverty as a curse. In one of Bernard Shaw's books it is spoken of as a crime—the greatest crime. Yet men like Abraham Lincoln have glorified it. Another, greater than he, who had not where to lay His head, glorified it. Yet many have gone down under its dark waters. Possibly they were weak souls who failed to get a perspective. It is difficult to get one when the eyes are blinded with tears. These are the ones who help us to develop the heavenly spirit of compassion. The down trodden are all about us. They are more in number than the slaves who aroused the tender pity of Abraham Lincoln.

There is an occult saying that "Before the feet can stand in the presence of the Masters they must be washed in the blood of the heart." Which means that before we can have real understanding we must have suffered greatly. Nothing else will give us compassionate understanding. Success and joy affirmations would be wonderful in a world of Edenic peace and happiness. But when we look about us and see the world as it is, with the millions of suffering people loaded down with burdens which seem intolerable, cheerful optimism seems little short of cheerful idiocy. Or at the best, cheerful selfishnss. Merely to close one's eyes to suffering and say "all is well" does not help to relieve it. Waiving of responsibility when couched in high terms is mere sophistry.

In every effort to help solve some of the problems of the world or to relieve some of its suffering, compassion is developed and the character ennobled. No life is truly great without this seal of heaven upon it.

While it is true that sorrow developes in us the sweetness graces it is equally true that real greatness of character is never spoiled by prosperity. After Abraham Lincoln had reached the pinnacle of national greatness he remained the grandly simple and kindly character that came from the Kentucky wilderness. Only small people become dictatorial and selfishy exacting when elevated to the high places of the land.

So when we contemplate a life and character like that of Abraham Lincoln we see the value of the heart's griefs and tragedies when the nature is large enough to expand through the pressure. As his sorrow was principally for others he grew thereby. Then came the tragic end. It was release for him as death must ever be to those who suffer to the extremity of endurance, but sorrow for the nation that needed him in that extreme crisis of its history. He was needed for the reconstruction work to follow the carnage and destruction. Many feel that the racial problems would have been greatly simplified if he could have lived to carry out his reconstructive policies.

HENRY J. TAYLOR THE SAN DIEGO UNION
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America Still Lincoln's Free Opportunity Land

From the beginning, the United States has had a special reputation throughout the world. It is a reputation that has led tens of millions to come here — and many more millions, especially the young, to try to come.

This reputation was founded on one tremendous fact. In America the plain man has always had a chance — and a second chance.

America is where the boy can grow up to be his own man.

Ours is really the free opportunity system. We would be closer to the mark if we called it that.

What was opportunity as Abraham Lincoln conceived opportunity?

Lincoln wanted to teach himself to write well and think clearly. But he had no paper and could not afford any. At night, when his work was done, he would bend his huge 6-foot-4 frame close down by the firelight and write and cipher on the back of a wooden shovel: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-0. When the shovel was covered with writing and ciphers, Lincoln would shave off a thin layer and begin writing some more.

You remember that Lincoln walked about 20 miles through the wilderness to borrow an English grammar. He could not get many other books to read so he read and reread the laws of the State of Indiana, with half the pages missing. Later, contemporaries describe Lincoln reading Shakespeare hour after hour in the White House — especially Lincoln's favorite play, "Macbeth."

At age 40, he wrote:

"If what I feel were equally distributed there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether I shall ever be better than I am I cannot tell. I fear I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible. I must die to be better, it appears to me."

This self-acknowledged failure made quite a reputation for himself in later life.

Lincoln owned only one home in his lifetime and it still stands on its quiet street in Springfield, Ill. Walk from this home from which he said goodby to old friends on leaving for the White House. Cross the Sangamon River. Walk to a quiet eminence in Oak Ridge Cemetery, where pilgrims gather to honor his birthday.

See him towering over you in bronze — the shapely, expressive hands turned in, curved. The head with its da Vinci cast on features, that might have been hewn out of rock — the brow a broad, almost-vertical escarpment; the lean, formidable jowl; the deep-set eyes; the haggard, bony face tilted as though attending and yet not wanting to hear through the blurred veil of his anguish.

The quickened awareness that a life has been nobly wrought adds a dimension to the lives of others, to the lives of each of us. As someone wrote of Lincoln, he makes all mankind seem just a bit taller. He wraps his spell around our hearts and is peaceful in his sleep in glory.

It never embarrassed Lincoln to change his mind, which often comes from thinking. For his mind never shrunk. He had an instinct for large affairs and a contempt for humbug. But on his birthday and on all days we honor most of all his inner self.

Instead of being driven toward self-importance, where was Lincoln driven? He was driven to his knees.

Said Lincoln: "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go."

No American in the history of our great country ever died less than Abraham Lincoln.

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